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SUBJECT: THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION: TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY AT WORK

REF: A. 05 RABAT 01766

1B. RABAT 00357  
1C. RABAT 00399  
1D. RABAT 00736

11. This cable is sensitive but unclassified. Please treat accordingly.

12. (SBU) The American Bar Association (ABA, reftel A) is a strong partner of the USG as it implements programs relating to the rule of law in Morocco. Funded by both DRL and MEPI, the ABA is effectively and inventively assisting in implementing important aspects of the Mission's reform strategy. The Human Rights Clinical Legal Education program at the Law Faculty of Hassan II University in Mohammedia, funded by DRL, is an excellent example of transformational diplomacy in action. The Mission works closely with the ABA, enabling mission officers to enhance their understanding of rule of law issues (Reftel C), and increase their knowledge of legal educational issues in Morocco (Reftels B and D).

13. (SBU) Because of the success of the legal education program, the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH), one of Morocco's most prominent and largest human rights organizations, approached the ABA to sign a "memorandum of understanding" (MOU). This is unusual in that AMDH, unlike most other Moroccan human rights organizations, has boycotted embassy programs, activities, and contacts since the start of the Iraq war. Knowing that the ABA is funded by the USG did not stop AMDH from recognizing the importance of the legal education clinic. The MOU between ABA and AMDH is an important step in enhancing the Mission's partnerships with Moroccan stakeholders.

14. (SBU) The MOU was signed by the ABA regional manager and the president of AMDH, Abdelhamid Amine, and is effective from June 1, 2006 through May 31, 2007. The purpose of the MOU, as stated in the agreement, is:

"In pursuing their common objectives of promoting human rights and strengthening the rule of law, the ABA and the AMDH enter into this partnership agreement in order to cooperate in the implementation of their respective programs.

This agreement aims also at developing synergies among the many civil society members who are partners of the ABA (NGOs, universities, bar associations) and the AMDH."

15. (SBU) The MOU also identifies in which areas the ABA and AMDH will cooperate; a detailed document will be developed

relating to the legal education program. They will:

--organize roundtables and workshops on approaches to human rights issues;  
--the ABA will provide technical and material assistance, e.g., the facilities, for human rights training activities;  
--share information on the development of respective activities.

**¶6.** (SBU) Comment: The mission is pleased with this development and hopes the ABA-AMDH partnership works to make a difference in the lives of young Moroccan law students and contributes further to our broader judicial reform goals. The DCM will visit the law clinic in Mohammedia on June 14 and award certificates to the law students who have completed the one-year clinical program.

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Riley